



ASTROCYLERA CARUNCULATA.

ANTHOCHÆRA CARUNCULATA.

Wattled Honey-eater.

Merops carunculatus, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 276.

Corvus paradoxus, Lath. Ind. Orn. Supp., p. 26.

——— *carunculatus*, Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. vii. p. 378.

Pie à pendeloques, Daud. Orn., tom. ii. p. 246. pl. 16.

Wattled Crow, Lath. Gen. Syn. Supp., vol. ii. p. 119.

Wattled Bee-eater, Lath. Gen. Syn. Supp., vol. ii. p. 150.—Phil. Bot. Bay, pl. in p. 164.—White's Journ., pl. in p. 144.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. viii. p. 173.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 158.

Anthochæra Lewinii, Vig. and Horsf. in Linn. Trans., vol. xv. p. 322, note.—Gould in Syn. Birds of Australia, Part I.—Swains. Class. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 326.—G. R. Gray, List of Gen. of Birds, 2nd edit., p. 20.

Djung-gung, Aborigines of Western Australia.

Wattle Bird of the Colonists.

THIS, the true *Merops carunculatus* of the older writers, enjoys an unusually wide range of habitat, extending as it does over the whole of the southern portion of the continent, being equally as abundant in Southern and Western Australia as in New South Wales; how far it may extend to the northward has not yet been ascertained; it does not inhabit Van Diemen's Land. I observed it to be very numerous in all the high gum-trees around Adelaide, in most parts of the interior, and in all the apple-tree flats and forests of *Eucalypti* of New South Wales. Mr. Gilbert's notes inform me that he met with it in all parts of Western Australia, but that it was most abundant among the Banksias in the York district. It is a showy active bird, constantly engaged in flying from tree to tree and searching among the flowers for its food, which consists of honey, insects, and occasionally berries. In disposition it is generally shy and wary, but at times is confident and bold: it is usually seen in pairs, and the males are very pugnacious. Its habits and manners, in fact, closely resemble those of the *A. inauris*, and like that bird, it utters with distended throat a harsh disagreeable note.

Its flight is slow and uneven, and rarely extends to any great distance.

It breeds in September and October. The nests observed by myself in the Upper Hunter district were placed on the horizontal branches of the *Angophoræ*, and were of a large rounded form, composed of small sticks and lined with fine grasses; those found by Mr. Gilbert in Western Australia were formed of dried sticks, without any kind of lining, and were placed in the open bushes. The eggs are two or three in number, one inch and three lines long by ten lines and a half broad; their ground colour is reddish buff, very thickly dotted with distinct markings of deep chestnut and umber and reddish brown, interspersed with a number of indistinct marks of blackish grey, which appear as if beneath the surface of the shell: eggs taken in New South Wales are somewhat larger than those from Western Australia, and have markings of a blotched rather than of a dotted form, and principally at the larger end.

The sexes are only distinguishable by the smaller size of the female.

Crown of the head, a line running from the base of the bill beneath the eye and the ear-coverts blackish brown; space under the eye silvery white, bounded behind by an oblong naked flesh-coloured spot, below which is a short pendulous wattle of a pinky blood-red colour; back of the neck and all the upper surface greyish brown, each feather having a stripe of white down the centre; upper tail-coverts greyish brown, broadly margined with grey; primaries and secondaries deep blackish brown, the former slightly and the latter broadly edged with grey; all the primaries tipped with white; two middle tail-feathers greyish brown, the remainder deep blackish brown, the whole largely tipped with white; throat, breast and flanks grey, the centre of each feather being lighter; middle of the abdomen yellow; irides bright hazel-red; legs brownish flesh-colour; inside of the mouth yellow.

The figure is of the natural size.